

Message Text

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S E C R E T NICOSIA 4332

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS DIA, USDOCOSOUTH, USEUCOM, CINCEUR

BEIRUT FOR RCAA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR CY UK UR

SUBJ: AEROFLOT OFFER - NICOSIA AIRPORT

1. I SAW U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER OLVER DECEMBER 4 ON AEROFLOT OFFER AND NICOSIA AIRPORT RE-OPENING. OLVER HAD DISCUSSED THIS THE PREVIOUS DAY WITH BOTH CLERIDES AND DENKTASH.

2. OLVER NOTED THAT THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL GROUP WITHIN GOC WHICH STRONGLY FAVORS BRINGING THE RUSSIANS IN IN SOME CAPACITY BELIEVING THIS WILL SERVE AS DETERRENT TO FURTHER TURKISH MILITARY ACTION. ONE SENIOR PROPONENT OF THIS THEORY IS FONOFF DIRGEN VENIAMIN.

3. BY CONTRAST, OLVER NOTED, CLERIDES STRONGLY OPPOSES AEROFLOT TIE. IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, HE TOLD OLVER THAT HE HAD "ISSUED ORDER" THAT CONTRACT SHOULD GO TO BRITISH MIDLANDS AND THATSLARNACA RUNWAY SHOULD BE LENGTHENED TO FIVE THOUSAND FEET TO ACCOMMODATE BMA VISCOUNTS. COMPLICATING FACTOR, WHICH

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CLERIDES ASKED OLVER TO TRY TO CLEAR UP, IS THAT BMA OFFER AS

PRESENTLY CAST IS APPARENTLY ONLY FOR SIX WEEKS. CLERIDES SAID HE ALSO SENDING CYPRUS AIRWAYS DIRECTOR SAVVA TO U.S. TO LOOK INTO AVAILABILITY OF "A NEW DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT" APPROPRIATE TO THIS KIND OF OPERATION.

4. IN THEIR CONVERSATION, OLVER POINTED OUT POLITELY TO CLERIDES THAT HE WOULD BE IN CHARGE FOR ONLY TWO MORE DAYS. WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT OF MAKARIOS' RETURN ON THIS QUESTION? CLERIDES REPLIED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS WITH THE ARCH-BISHOP IN ATHENS. LATTER HAD SEEMED TO BE IN AGREEMENT WITH HIM, BUT ONE COULD NEVER TELL.

5. AS INSTRUCTED BY FCO, OLVER IS DELAYING PLAYING THE AKROTIRI CARD UNTIL IT BECOMES ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO BLOCK AEROFLOT ARRANGEMENT.

6. ON AIRPORT RE-OPENING, DENKTASH TOLD OLVER HE CONSIDERS THE BALL NOW IN CLERIDES' COURT. HE HAS PASSED TO HIM THE CONSIDERED POSITION OF GOT. THIS IS THAT AIRPORT TO BE MANAGED BY A JOINT GREEK CYPRIOT-TURKISH CYPRIOT BOARD WHICH WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO CALL ON UN/ICAO OR OTHER ASSISTANCE AS NEEDED. TROOP DISPOSITIONS ON PERIMETER WOULD REMAIN AS THEY NOW ARE.

7. DENKTASH INFORMED OLVER THAT CLERIDES HAD BEEN COOL TO HIS PROPOSAL, PREFERING UN/ICAO MANAGEMENT WITH ASSISTANCE OF JOINT BOARD. HOWEVER, THEY HAD AGREED TO DISCUSS FURTHER AT DECEMBER 4 NEGOTIATING SESSION UNDER UN/SYG SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE WECKMANN.

8. COMMENT: GREEK CYPRIOT DESIRE TO GET NICOSIA AIRPORT RE-OPENED IS SO STRONG THAT CLERIDES MAY GO ALONG WITH GOT PROPOSAL ALTHOUGH IT GIVES TURKS A STANDING IN AIRPORT MANAGEMENT FROM WHICH THEY ARE MOST UNLIKELY EVER TO WITHDRAW.

9. OLVER ASKED THAT CLERIDES' POSITION BE PROTECTED. CRAWFORD

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